



Children's Justice Act (CJAC)

Program Information:

The federal Children's Justice Act (CJA) program was established in 1986 by Congress as Section 109 of the Child Abuse Prevention and Treatment Act (CAPTA) and provides grants to States to improve the investigation, prosecution and judicial handling of case of child abuse and neglect, particularly child sexual abuse and exploitation, in a manner that limits additional trauma to the child victim. This also includes the handling of child fatality cases in which child abuse or neglect is suspected and some cases of children with disabilities and serious health problems who also are victims of abuse and neglect.

Since Fiscal Year 2000, \$17 million in CJA formula funds have been made available annually for distribution to the 50 States, the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico, American Samoa, Guam, the Northern Mariana Islands, and the Virgin Islands. States must apply for the funds and meet certain eligibility requirements, including receipt of the CAPTA Basic State Grant (in MD, the Department of Human Resources (DHR) is the recipient) and establishment of a CJA Task Force (in Maryland, this is the Children's Justice Act Committee) as outlined in the legislation. Maryland currently receives approximately \$306,000 annually in CJA funding.

In Maryland, the CJAC is one of three standing committees of the State Council of Child Abuse and Neglect (SCCAN) per MD Family Law §5-7A-05. The SCCAN is staffed by DHR.

Eligibility

State and local units of government, non-profit organizations, and non-governmental victim services organizations including faith-based and community-based organizations that demonstrate knowledge of and commitment to improving the administrative, judicial, and/or investigative handling of criminal and/or civil child abuse and/or neglect cases.

Match: Not Required

Important Dates for CJAC Grants

May	NOFA posting	September	Award Notifications Mailed
Ongoing	Technical Assistance Training Video	October 1	Program Start Date
July	Applications due	September 30	Program End Date



Fact Sheet

Larry Hogan
Governor

Boyd K. Rutherford
Lieutenant Governor

Christopher B. Shank
Executive Director

Funding Priorities:

Section 107(d) of the Act requires the CJAC to undertake a comprehensive review and evaluation of the investigative, administrative and judicial handling of cases of child abuse and neglect and to make training and policy recommendations at 3-year intervals, with annual updates.

Listed below are funding priorities based on the 2012 3-Year Assessment. The 2015 3-Year Assessment is currently underway and new funding priorities may be modified to meet the existing needs.

- Enhance the ability of law enforcement to appropriately recognize, assess, and investigate child abuse and/or neglect and to identify threats to a child's safety during police responses to suspected child abuse and/or neglect cases.
- Enhance the skills of Court Appointed Special Advocates, lawyers who represent children (i.e., CINA, dependency cases, etc.), and judges in handling child maltreatment cases, and enhance court sensitivity to child victims & witnesses while also improving the courts' handling of cases involving very young children.
- Enhance the response to child abuse and neglect in public and privately operated institutional juvenile facilities including but not limited to: group homes, residential facilities for youth, and foster homes.
- Enhance interventions for child abuse or neglect victims who have physical, mental, and/or behavioral disabilities, cognitive impairments, or other serious health conditions including but not limited to: Autism and Autism Spectrum Disorder, Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorders, Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD), Attention Deficit Disorder, and language and speech disorders.
- Enhance the use of multi-disciplinary teams & Child Advocacy Centers (CAC) to improve training on suspected child abuse and/or neglect cases including but not limited to victims of child human trafficking, LGBTQ youth, and immigrant youth and families.
- Enhance the recognition, assessment, screening, response, referral, and joint investigative process for suspected child abuse and/or neglect cases including but not limited to victims of child human trafficking, LGBTQ youth, and immigrant youth and families.

Additional Resources:

www.goccp.maryland.gov

www.governor.maryland.gov

www.dhr.state.md.us

<http://www.acf.hhs.gov/>

<http://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/cb>